# Libraries of Washington State
# In My Opinion Guidelines

**Guidelines for In My Opinion submissions**

In My Opinion piece are much more difficult to secure placement for as opinion editors determine which pieces will be accepted and will notify authors if they have been selected. Preference for an "In My Opinion" feature goes to short essays on highly topical issues or themes of particular relevance to the communities the paper serves. Good, concise writing is especially welcome. Essays exceeding 500 words will usually be too lengthy for consideration.

**What are the most common reasons for rejection?**

The most prevalent reason is competition. On a typical day, a paper may receive up to 100 "In My Opinion" submissions, but publish only one. And a growing percentage of op-ed guest columns are solicited by the editors. Many of the offerings are simply too long—making points that could have been made in letters to the editor. Others are turned down because they lack universal interest or repeat a point of view that has already been aired recently in letters or op-ed pieces. Many unsuccessful submissions lack appeal to a wide range of readers or delve into nonlocal subjects that editors prefer to leave to the national columnists.

**What's the best way to submit an In My Opinion piece.**

Check with your local paper. The simplest way is to call the Opinion Editor to discuss your idea for submission before you submit, then send it via e-mail, fax or by mail. As with letters to the editor, you should ALWAYS coordinate your submission with other your library system director, public information office or marketing staff member before submitting.

**Topics to consider for Letters to the Editor and In My Opinion pieces**
- Advocacy on legislative actions or inaction, relative bills and budget legislation
- Community praise for key milestones—leverage the opportunity to share success stories and demonstrate your positive impact in the community (e.g. summer reading, early literacy programs, author readings, job seeker workshops, etc.)
- Issues related to literacy, access to information and information technology, support for education, lifelong learning and other community issues where the library can be positioned as a resource/centerpoint.